MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM

NR Eligible: yes _X no

Property Name: Walter P. Johnson House	Inventory Number: M:35-46
Address: 9100 Old Georgetown Road	Historic district: yes X no
City: Bethesda Zip Code: 20814	County: Montgomery
USGS Quadrangle(s): Kensington	
Property Owner: Margaret N. Alexander Ta	ax Account ID Number: 07-00554843
Tax Map Parcel Number(s): P43 Tax Map Number	: HP11
Project: BRAC Intersections at Bethesda Naval Center; MD 187 @ Oak Agency:	SHA
Agency Prepared By: State Highways Administration	
Preparer's Name: Jennifer Goold	Date Prepared: 04/28/2009
Documentation is presented in: Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (MIHP)	M: 35-46.
Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: X Eligibility recommended	Eligibility not recommended
Criteria: A X B C D Considerations: A B	CDEFG
Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource t	to a NR district/property:
Name of the District/Property:	
Inventory Number: Eligible: yes	Listed: yes
Site visit by MHT Staff yes X no Name:	Date:
Description of Property and Justification: (Please attatch map and photo) The exterior appearance of the Walter P. Johnson House remains much the same as exception of a few replacement windows and construction of a rear deck. The interior The Walter P. Johnson House is eligible for listing in the National Register of History home of legendary Washington Senator's pitcher, Walter Johnson. Walter Perry "Totalionally significant baseball player. One of the original five ball players inducted in 1936, Johnson is widely considered baseball's greatest pitcher. As Ty Cobb recap powerful arm ever turned loose in a ball park." (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walter Johnson has held or still holds several significant pitching records including the record 55 years. He is second only to Cy Young in games won at 417. Johnson's record for Senators at age 19, Johnson spent his entire playing career (1907-1927) with the D.C in 1913, 1918, and 1924. He was the American League Most Valuable Player twice two other pitchers in the history of baseball. He led the Senators to the World Series	or was not reexamined as part of this DOE. ric Places (NRHP) under Criterion B as the The Big Train" Johnson (1887-1946) is a into the Baseball Hall of Fame when it opened alled, "every one of us knew we'd met the most Johnson, accessed 4/27/2009.) ord for most strikeouts (3,509), which stood for or 110 shutouts still stands. Recruited for the C. team. Johnson won the pitching triple crown in 1913 and 1924, a feat only accomplished by
	B C D E F G
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services Reviewer, National Register Program	Date Date

M:35-46

Walter P. Johnson House

Page 2

defeated.

Walter Johnson is also renowned as a gentleman and a family man. A long-time friend of President Calvin Coolidge, who was a great National's fan, Coolidge often cited Johnson's character as his most important trait and one that had an edifying effect on the sport. "'A more modest man never lived', says columnist Shirley Povich of The Washington Post, who knew him well. 'Not only was he the greatest pitcher of his times and times before and maybe times since, he simply commanded love with his kindness and gentleness and honesty."' (http://vault.sportsillustrated.cnn.com/vault/article/magazine/MAG1066637/index.htm, accessed 4/28/2009)

Walter Johnson married Hazel Roberts, who was a Congressman's daughter and great beauty, in 1914. Walter and Hazel had a happy marriage and six children (one of whom did not live past infancy). 9100 Old Georgetown Road is also the home that the family occupied when Hazel died suddenly in 1930, apparently from heatstroke after driving alone cross-country with the children. The funeral was held in the front parlor and Walter mourned silently by the coffin for days. It is generally noted that Walter never really recovered from her death and he did not remarry.

The Walter P. Johnson House, at 9100 Old Georgetown Road, is the building most closely associated with his productive life. This is the grandest house the Johnson family occupied during Walter's baseball career. He purchased the house in 1925 at the pinnacle of his professional life between two years of leading the Washington Senators to the World Series and the family lived there until 1936.

Likely purchased with a World Series bonus, the home represented Johnson's greatest level of prosperity, as well as his love of a rural lifestyle, while retaining the close link to Washington D.C. and his baseball team. The property is described thus in Johnson's biography: "Set back from the road by a large front yard and circular driveway, the property included a four-acre fruit orchard, a grape arbor, flower gardens, and a smaller house for domestic help. There were chicken coops with the latest in electric poultry-raising equipment, with which Johnson resumed his old hobby of raising purebred birds. It wasn't long before the place had taken on the appearance of a small farm, with a cow, a horse, and of course numerous dogs. A kennel was built where Johnson and Joe Engel raised prize-winning hounds together, and a side yard was fashioned into a baseball diamond." (Henry W. Thomas, Walter Johnson: Baseball's Big Train (1998), p. 288.) Daughter Carolyn Thomas said "some of [my] fondest childhood memories are tied to the old farmhouse" where "I spent many a summer curled up in an apple tree and reading Tarzan books." It was the place where Johnson would "gladly receive a car full of fans who arrived at the house unannounced during dinner." (http://gazette_net/gazette_archive/1999/199934/bethesda/news/a23980-1.html, accessed 4/27/2009.)

Not well paid by today's sport standards, the Johnsons lived in a rowhouse at 1843 Irving Street in the Mount Pleasant neighborhood of Washington D.C. from 1915 to 1925. This house still stands. In 1936, Walter retired to a farm in Germantown, MD. While Johnson loved the countryside, his children remember this as a difficult period of their lives when the motherless family eked out a living in relative obscurity. Johnson was diagnosed with brain cancer in 1945 and spent the last year of his life in the hospital. He died at age 59. The Germantown farm is now the site of a school and the house no longer remains at this property.

The Walter P. Johnson House retains integrity of Location, Design, Materials, Workmanship, and Association. Its integrity of Setting has been lost, which has reduced its integrity of Feeling. The Walter P. Johnson House remains at its original location. The house is well-preserved and retains much of its original materials, which display the house's period workmanship. Character defining features, such as the narrow lapped wood siding, large wood windows, substantial wood front porch, and front entry with sidelights all remain. The original roofing material has been replaced with asphalt and some original windows and shutters have been replaced or removed. Its association as the Washington D.C. home of Hall of Fame pitcher Walter P. Johnson is widely

MARYLA	ND HISTO	ORICAL	TRUST	REVI	EW							
Eligibility recommended			Eligibility not recommended									
Criteria:	A	В	C	D	Considerations:	A	В	C	D	E	F	G
MHT Com		er, Offic	e of Pres	servatio	on Services			Date				
-	Reviewer, National Register Program						Date					

NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM

M:35-46

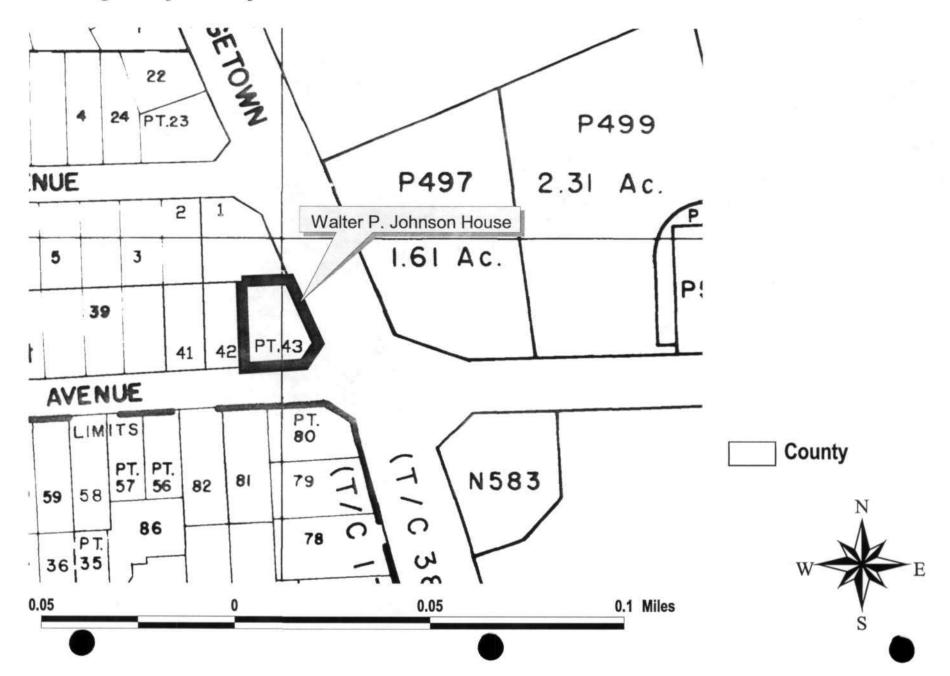
Walter P. Johnson House

Page 3

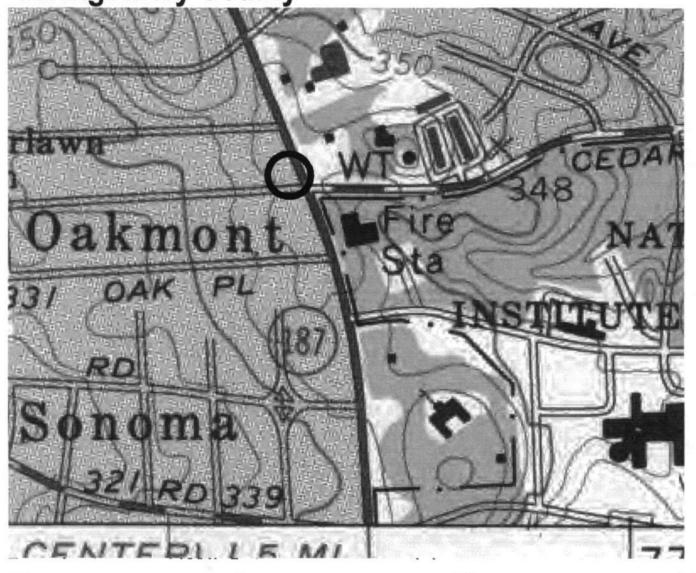
acknowledged, to the extent that the house has a plaque stating that it is listed in the NRHP as the home of Walter P. Johnson. The house's historic country setting is gone. After Johnson sold the property, it was subdivided and the house is now surrounded by a typical 20th century Washington D.C. suburb. Once a dirt road, Old Georgetown Road is now a wide, busy commuter route and the house sits right on the roadway. However, the house is much larger, older, and grander than its neighbors and through its integrity of design, materials, and workmanship retains elements of the feeling of its period of significance when the Walter P. Johnson family resided here. The property boundary consists of the home's current tax parcel: HP11-P43.

MARYLA! Eligibility			IKUSI		gibility not recommend	ded						
Criteria: A MHT Comments:		В	C	D	Considerations:	A	В	C	_D	E	F -	_G
	Reviewe	er, Offic	e of Pres	servatio	on Services			Date				
		Reviewer, National Register Program										

Walter P. Johnson House (M: 35-46)
Tax Parcel Map (HP11-P43)
Montgomery County



Walter P. Johnson House (M: 35-46) USGS Quad Map (Kensington) Montgomery County







0.2 0.4 Miles



M: 35-46 Walter P. Johnson House Montgomery County, MD Jennifer Goold 3.31.09 MD SHPO View northwest. 10+6



M: 35-46 Walter P. Johnson House Montgomery County, MD Jennier Goold 3.31.09 MD SHPO View southwest. 20F6



M:35-46 Walter P. Johnson House Montgomery County, MD Jennifer boold 3.31.09 MD SHPO View West. 3 of 6



M: 35-46 Walter P. Johnson House Monfgomery County, MD Jennifer Goold 3.31.09 MD SHPO View northwest. 4 of 6



M: 35-46 Walter P. Johnson House Montgomery County, MD Jennifer Goold 3.31.09 MD SHPO view northeast 50f 6



M: 35 - 46 Walker P. Johnson House Montgomery County, MD Jennifer Goold 3,31,09 MD SHPO View east 60+6

Survey No. M 35/46

Magi No.

DOE __yes __no

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Nam	e (indicate p	referred name)		
Wa	lter P. Johnson			
historic		NA 100-1200-1811-1815		
and/or common		-		
2. Loca	tion			
street & number	9100 Old Geor	getown Road		not for publication
city, town Be	thesda	vicinity of	congressional distric	t 8
state Ma	ryland	county	Montgomery	
3. Class	sification			
Category district building(s) structure site object	Ownership public X private both Public Acquisition in process being considered x not applicable	Status X occupied unoccupied work in progress Accessible X yes: restricted yes: unrestricted no	Present Useagriculturecommercialeducationalentertainmentgovernmentindustrialmilitary	museum park private residence religious scientific transportation other:
4. Own	er of Prope	erty (give names a	nd mailing addres	ses of <u>all</u> owners)
name Eli	zabeth Fleming	N.		d d
street & number	1017 Encino R	oad	telephone	no.: 619-435-6930
city, town Cor	onado	state	and zip code Ca	alifornia 92118
5. Loca	tion of Leg	al Description	on	
courthouse, regis	try of deeds, etc. Mo	ntgomery County (Courthouse	liber 2879
street & number				folio 541
city, town	Ro	ckville	state	e Maryland
6. Repr	esentation	in Existing	Historical Su	rveys
title No	ne			
date			federal s	state county loc
pository for sur	vey records	1 1		
city, town			stat	e

7. Description

Survey No. M: M: 35-46

Condition

___ fair

__ excellent X good

deteriorated

unexposed

Check one ___ unaltered x_altered

Check one

X original site

moved date of move

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

(SEE ATTACHED SHEETS)

prehistoric archeology-prehistoric archeology-historic		archeology-historic agriculture X architecture art commerce	X community planning	law literature military music	science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater	
Specific	dates	1905-06	Builder/Architect		sports	
check:	Appl:	icable Criteria:A nd/or icable Exception:A l of Significance:	B _C _D _I			
Prepare		a summary paragraph o	of significance and a	a general statement	of history and	
		(SEE ATTACH	ED SHEETS)	- E	O:	

	es in Johnson f	family scrap	phooks; interview with Carolyn
of the Pitchers	(1948); Bill 3	James, Histo	L. Treat, <u>Walter Johnson</u> : King orical Baseball Abstract (1986)
	A STATE OF THE PERSON NAMED IN	(1956); And	the Early 20th Century (18
10. Geograp	hical Data	the contractions	the Barry Both Contary (196
Acreage of nominated prope	erty approx. 1/2	acre	
Quadrangle name			Quadrangle scale
UTM References do NOT	complete UTM refer	rences	
Zone Easting	Northing	BZone	e Easting Northing
с	Lililia	DL	Hiladidad
EL LILLI		FLI	
		н	
Verbal boundary descrip	tion and justification		
Lots 41,	X C		Subdivision of Walter P.
List all states and count	ies for properties over	lapping state or	county boundaries
state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code
11. Form Pro	epared By		
name/title Eileen Mc	Guckian	N I FAMIL	A LEGICAL DE
organization			date February 1988
street & number P. O.	Box 4262		telephone 301-762-0096
city or town Rocks	ville	PER SINA	state Maryland 20850

Major Bibliographical References

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to:

Maryland Historical Trust

Shaw House 21 State Circle

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

(301) 269-2438

Survey No. M: 35-46

Section #7 Description

This large square Colonial Revival house is executed in what is sometimes termed the "Free Colonial" style. The combination of symmetry, sizeable massing, classical detailing, and Victorian irregularity produces an elegance which bridges popular architectural styles of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The 2 1/2 story 3 bay by 3 bay frame residence sits on a high fieldstone foundation. Its ample proportions suggest prosperity, and the large windows and porch convey a feeling of light and grace. The hipped roof, covered with asphalt, peaks at the center; it is broken on the north and south slopes by tall chimneys and on the east and west slopes by dormers.

The house features a narrow clapboard siding, mostly 1/1 double-hung sash windows with plain trim, and a full-width front porch. It faces east, maintaining its historic orientation to Old Georgetown Road and the trolley line. Two contemporary residences are located a few blocks north on Old Georgetown Road, like the Johnson house lessened both by subdivision and road widening.

The house looks almost the way it did when the Johnsons came in 1925. (see photos attached). The front (east) facade features a prominent entrance centered between paired 1/1 windows flanked by louvered shutters. The six-panelled wooden door is framed by molded pilasters capped with bullseyes, flanked by 5-sectioned sidelights, and surmounted by a 4-light transom. On the second floor, the symmetry is continued with 15-light double doors in the center bay and a single large window on either side. The hipped roof is broken by a central hipped-roof dormer with paired windows. Across the width of this facade is a porch with slightly-sloped shed tin-covered roof, wide fascia, tapered Doric columns, plain square balusters, and brick piers connected by wood lattice. The porch ceiling is of narrow wainscoting, and the wooden floor appears to be laid over a similar earlier one. Newer wood porch steps lead off to the north of the building.

On the first story of the north facade, there is a paired 1/1 window in the east bay, and a smaller paired 2/2 hinged window in the west bay. The central bay, and the two windows on the second story, are single 1/1 double-hung sash. Two small basement windows are boarded up.

The south facade, which faces Oakmont Avenue, provides a bit of Victorian whimsey with its two-story diagonal-sided protruding bays at the east and west ends of this facade. Each of the protruding bays has single central windows on the first and second stories. Three of the diagonal apertures are doors which once opened onto porches. Under the wide eave is a flat fascia and narrow wainscoting. Between the bays on the first floor is an enclosed porch with triple 1/1 windows, narrow clapboard siding, brick piers, and a nearly-flat tin roof; a second-story sleeping porch shown in the Johnson photograph no longer exists. There are two basement windows.

The rear (west) facade abandons the symmetry of the others. Its windows range from standard 1/1 to a tiny 2/2 hinged opening; one window opening has been enlarged to accommodate a door, and a door opening has been reduced to window size. A modern wooden fire escape with three landings has been added.

Section 7 cont.

A scattering of large trees remain on the property; new pines and other landscaping have replaced the windmill, grape arbor, and baseball diamond. Two asphalt parking lots are connected by a drive, and can be accessed by either Old Georgetown Road or Oakmont Avenue.

The interior of the house reflects the same architectural transition as the exterior; bullseye molding and transoms of the late 19th century reside comfortably alongside open archways and spacious rooms from the early 20th century. The floor plan is little changed from the Johnson occupancy, although the grandeur of the entrance has been lessened by reduction of the stairway space. The south front room, used by the Johnsons as a music and trophy room, retains traffic patterns onto the former sun porch and into the dining room to the west. The attic rooms are brightened by the two dormers, and the basement fieldstone reflects the contours of the house. The interior could be restored to its 1925 appearance without much alteration.

Section #8 Significance

SUMMARY

This house is significant as an example of turn-of-the-century speculative construction in the Montgomery County suburbs, newly connected to Washington, D.C. by electric railway, and as an excellent example of the Colonial Revival style of architecture. It is also important for its association with Walter P. Johnson (1887-1946), pitcher and manager for the Washington Senators baseball team, as he lived here from 1925 to 1936.

HISTORY AND SUPPORT

In 1890 the Tennallytown and Rockville Railroad Company was incorporated, and plans for the new electric railway line to parallel the old Georgetown-to-Rockville Road into Montgomery County were set. The line ran from Washington to Alta Vista, just beyond Bethesda, where in 1891 the Bethesda Park amusement center was constructed. Washingtonians rode the trolley to stay at the hotel and to enjoy the zoo, botanical garden, rides, and dance hall.

Owners of farmland tracts along Old Georgetown Road formed or sold to development companies which subdivided the large parcels into desirable suburban lots or country estates, the drawing card being easy access by trolley between Washington and the Montgomery County countryside.

In 1899, five D.C. and Montgomery County residents incorporated "The Creston Land and Improvement Company of Montgomery County". Its objects and purposes were "buying, selling, subdividing, mortgaging, leasing, improving, disposing of or otherwise dealing in lands in this State or partly in this State and partly beyond this State, and the building and erection of, operating, leasing, selling, mortgaging, improving or otherwise disposing of schools, hotels, boarding houses, dwelling houses or residences, stables or other buildings...." With its principal office in Bethesda, and capital stock of \$20,000, the company planned to develop acreage newly purchased along Old Georgetown Road. Prospects were enhanced by proximity to the new electric railway. 1

During the next four years, Creston Land and Improvement Company sold off 22 parcels ranging from one-half to ten acres each. Most of the transactions also involved the Bethesda Land Company of Montgomery County, which incorporated in 1901 with some of the same individuals and identical purposes as Creston's. Many of these parcels were identified as being located in "Alta Vista". Parcels were sometimes sold with buildings on them, and with the two land companies providing substantial mortgages to purchasers. Most of the purchasers listed Washington, D.C. addresses and, interestingly enough, a number of them were women.

Creston Land and Improvement Company in 1901 sold three acres to Fannie Thomas, who sold to Lenora Channon two years later; both women lived in Washington, D.C. The house first appeared on the tax rolls in 1906, with improvements valued at \$3500, household furniture at \$300.3

Lenora Channon's summer house was constructed in a "country version" of the Colonial Revival style of architecture popular around the turn of the century. It incorporated some elaborate detailing of late 19th century Victorian residential architecture as well as some of the simpler features of the 20th century return to classical forms.

In 1908, Ms. Channon sold the house to Ralph E. Burgess of Washington, D.C., who added a 5.57 acre parcel, for a total of 8.57 acres. As he retained a D.C. address when he sold the property to Frank and Mariam Steward in 1917, presumably he kept the property for summer use.⁴

The hopes of the Creston and Bethesda land companies were dampened by Bethesda Park's destruction by fire before 1900; the railroad company quickly negotiated an extension of the line to the County Fairgrounds. Also, the slowness of commuting by trolley discouraged many Washington families from using their suburban houses as more than summer retreats. Not until the 1920s, when the automobile came into common usage, on roads newly improved or constructed by the State Roads Commission, did more than a few areas in Montgomery County begin to develop as true residential suburbs. Trolley service was abandoned along the Tennallytown to Rockville line by the end of the 1930s.

The property changed hands in rapid succession, all of the owners being residents of Washington, D.C. The Stewards did not keep the property long, selling it to James E. and Nellie S. Wick in 1920. The Wicks in turn sold to Elisha Hanson in 1923, and it was Hanson's property which caught the eye of a Washington baseball player who had recently come into some money and wanted to move his wife and four small children out to the country.

Walter Perry Johnson pitched for the Washington Senators from 1907 to 1927. His remarkable pitching and hitting abilities were major reasons behind the Senators' 1924 World Series win. It is possible that he purchased the house at 9100 Old Georgetown Road from his World Series bonus and fees received for writing articles.

Newspapers in July, 1925, reported the popular ballplayer's purchase of "the Elisha Hanson estate" on the Georgetown Road. The location was variously listed as "Alta Vista", "just west of Battery Park", "just west of Edgemoor", and "near Bethesda". The house was described as "an eleven-room residence, modernly equipped, in the center of an 8 1/2 acre tract. There is a wide front lawn, with plenty of shade flowers and shrubbery. In the rear is a four-acre orchard and a grape arbor. There are also coops which will house 2,000 chickens, a feature which appeals to the great pitcher, who is considering going into chicken farming on a large scale during his off months." Included with photographs of the house was speculation as to whether the Johnsons and their young children would make this their year-round residence, or Washington their permanent home. 7

The Johnson children have fond memories of life at 9100 Old Georgetown Road. There was a rose garden, a grape arbor, stands of pine and apple trees, a windmill and a tenant house. And of course there was a baseball diamond.

Section 8 cont.

Walter Johnson managed the Washington Senators from 1929 to 1932, moving on to Cleveland where he concluded his baseball career in 1935. The Johnsons lived on Old Georgetown Road through 1936, although Hazel Lee Johnson died in 1930 and Walter's mother came to live with them and to raise the five children. Johnson raised chickens, which he generously made available for local fundraisers. 9

Walter Johnson, known as the Big Train, was one of the first five players inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1936, along with Ty Cobb, Christy Mathewson, Babe Ruth, and Honus Wagner. Johnson's Hall of Fame inscription reads: "Conceded to be fastest ball pitcher in history of game. Won 414 games with losing team behind him many years. Holder of strike out and shut out records." Many consider Johnson the greatest right-handed pitcher of all time. Known primarily for his fastball pitch, Johnson for many years held both pitching and hitting records. 10

In the summer of 1936, Walter Johnson sold his home in Alta Vista to Harry Hoskinson and Eugene B. Casey. 11 Johnson purchased a 552-acre farm in Germantown (now the site of Seneca Valley High School) and moved his family out there. Walter Johnson continued his involvement with Montgomery County by serving as a County Commissioner from 1938 to 1940 and 1942 until his death of a brain tumor on December 10, 1946. He was the Republican nominee for Congress in 1940. A public high school was named in his honor in 1956.

Hoskinson and Casey subdivided the 8.34 acres in "Alta Vista" into 43 lots12. The two largest lots faced Old Georgetown Road -- #43, on which the Johnson house was located, and #1, at the corner of newly-created Johnson Avenue.

Julian Bauserman purchased the former Johnson house on Lot 43, along with adjacent lots 41 and 42, in 1938. The property then was owned by the Fry and McKee families, who sold to Admiral Thomas Buchanan Dugan in 1944. The present owner, a step-daughter of Admiral Dugan, was deeded the property in 1961. It is currently leased to a tutoring business.

¹Montgomery County Corporation Record EBP1/273, March 7, 1899; Land Records, TD8/16, March 11, 1899.

²Corporation Record EBP1/293, March 25, 1901.

³Land Records, TD19/225, December 26, 1901; 176/74, December 15, 1903; Assessment Records, 1900-1906.

⁴Land Records, 200/5, July 25, 1908; 264/30, April 30, 1917.

⁵Ibid., 292/452.

⁶Ibid., 324/469.

⁷Scrapbooks in possession of Carolyn Thomas, Walter Johnson's daughter; see attachment A.

⁸Carolyn Thomas, interview February 1988.

⁹Elsie Bissett Moore, teacher at Montrose School from 1930 to 1944, recalls every schoolchild's conviction that he

was eating a chicken raised by Walter Johnson.

10Historical Baseball Abstract (Bill James, 1986); Walter Johnson: King of

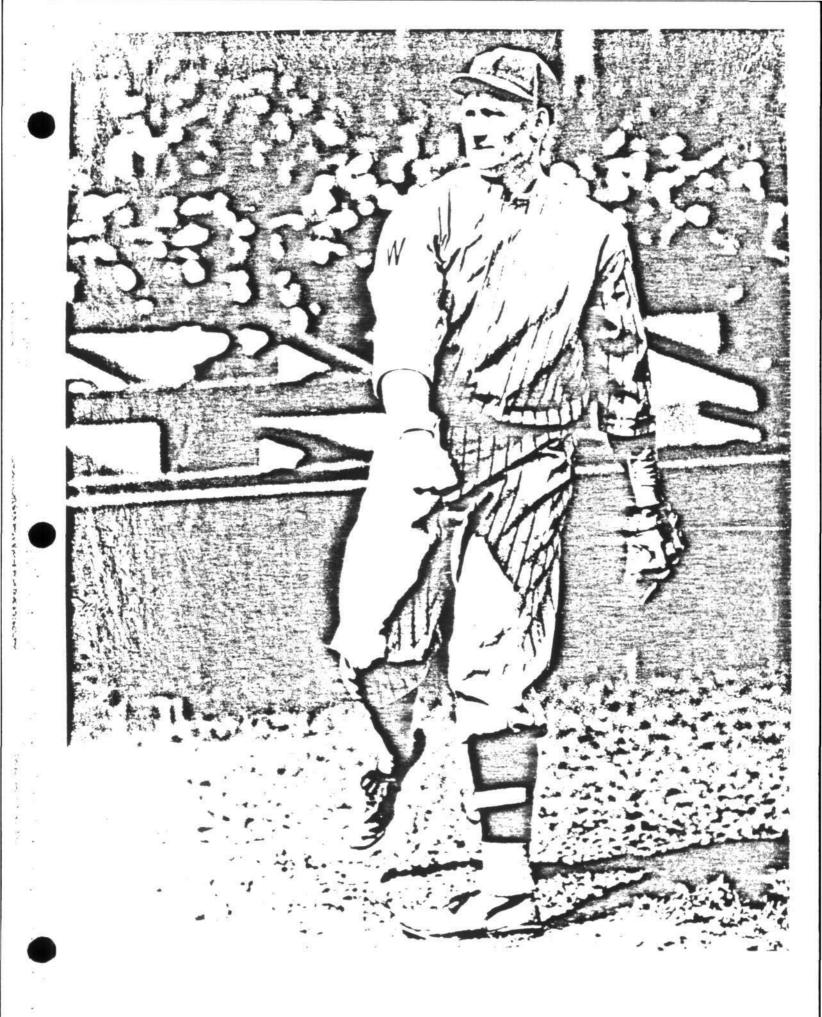
the Pitchers, (Roger L. Treat, 1948).

Tland Records, 632/169, June 15, 1936.

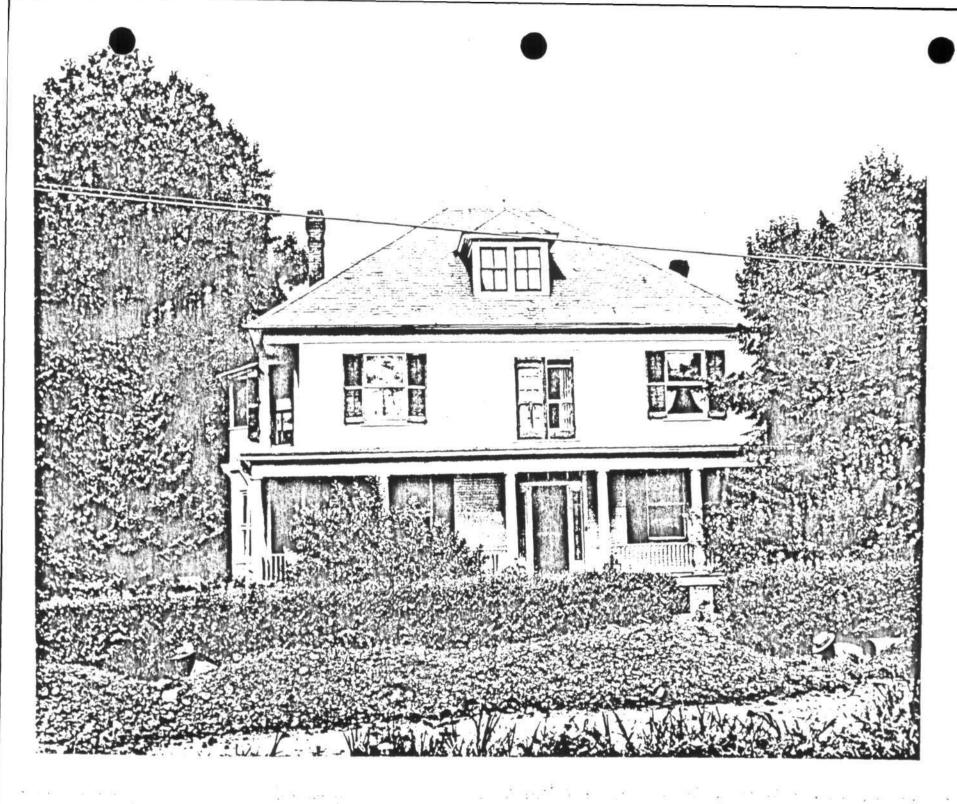
¹²Plat 11/798, February 1937.

¹³Land Records, 695/226.

^{14928/205,} January 3, 1944.



M: 35-46



M. 35-46



n 22 40



THE HOLD WAR PARKET WITH THE